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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

BHAKTI—II

TWO men went into a garden. No sooner had one of them entered the gate, then he began to count the mango trees, how many mangoes each tree bore, and what might be the approximate price of the whole orchard. The other went to the owner, made his acquaintance, and quietly going under a mango tree began to pluck the fruit and eat it with the owner's consent. Now who is the wiser of the two? Eat mangoes, it will satisfy your hunger. What is the good of counting the leaves and making vain calculations? The vain man of intellect is uselessly busy with finding out the 'why and wherefore' of creation, while the humble man of wisdom makes acquaintance with the Creator and enjoys supreme bliss in this world.

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ONCE upon a time conceit entered the heart of the divine sage Narada, and he thought there was no greater devotee than himself. Reading his heart, the Lord Sri Vishnu said, "Narada, go to such and such a place, there is a great Bhakta of mine there, and cultivate his acquaintance." Narada went there and found an agriculturist who rose early in the morning, pronounced the name of

Hari only once and taking his plough went out to till the ground all day long. In night he went to bed after pronouncing the name of Hari once more. Narada thought within himself, 'How can this rustic be called a lover of God? I see him busily engaged in worldly duties, and he has no signs of a pious man about him.' Narada then came back to the Lord and said all he thought of his new acquaintance. The Lord said, "Narada, take this cup full of oil, go round this city and come back with it, but take care that not a drop of the oil falls to the ground." Narada did as he was told, and on his return, the Lord asked, "Well, Narada, how often did you remember me in your walk?" "Not once, my Lord," replied Narada, "and how could I, when I had to watch this cup brimming with oil?" The Lord then said, "This one cup of oil did so divert your attention that even you forgot me altogether, but think of that rustic who, with the heavy load of a family, still remembers me twice every day."

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KNOWLEDGE and Love of God are ultimately one and the same. There is no difference between pure Knowledge and pure Love.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA DEV

BEJUR MATH

ON Sunday March the 8th last the seventieth birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was held at Belur Math. The arrangements for the reception of many thousands of visitors, and for the feeding of the poor had been well carried out. And the shrine containing the picture of Sri Ramakrishna was particularly beautiful with flowers and palms. Here parties of people came for music and worship throughout the day, and there was ample space under the great awning with which this part of the lawn was covered. Before noon arrived a party of Kali-Kirtan and sat under the jack-tree behind the Math, chanting the praises of the Divine Mother. Later, came the worshipers of Sri Gauranga, and added their chanting and dancing to the whole.

Amongst the faces of Sri Ramakrishna's immediate disciples,—now alas! growing noticeably fewer every year,—old Gopaler-Ma, and the senior Sannyasins were conspicuous.

But on the bank above the Ganges, at the south-east corner of the grounds, only a bed of *tulsi* plants, growing within a brick enclosure, marked the spot where his own disciples had looked their last on the face of one who but a year ago was present at this feast.

The absence of the Swami Vivekananda's face and voice, that absence which can never again be made good, has given a sad pre-eminence to this seven-

tieth birthday of the Master. New days dawn in India, and the festival will doubtless continue year after year through many a century. But already the book of the Blessed Life is closed, the story that lies at the heart of each new evangel is an accomplished fact.

One thing only remains to us, the disciples of these,—that we lift higher than ever that mighty banner of the synthesis of faiths that they entrusted to us; that we grow brighter daily in our realisation of the light they threw upon us; and that in life and death alike we prove our will to seal with clear proof the great doctrine of strength and manhood that they taught us.

To some, the *tulsi* plants growing in the shadow of the Bel-tree, may have seemed as tokens of sorrow: but to us, amidst the fresh green of the spring time, and the sight of steamer after steamer discharging its load of holiday-makers, they only spoke, with a deeper voice than ever Israel heard, the words that are actually true, difficult as mourners may find it to believe them in the hour of apparent sunset, "Arise! Shine! for thy light *is come* and the glory of the Lord *is risen* upon thee!"

Worship of great men is the expression of the heart's deepest admiration for their life and conduct. And is not this the strongest incentive to do as they themselves did?

LECTURES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

COSMOLOGY

(Concluded from page 43)

THE next question that comes is rather a fine one. Some of the European philosophers have asserted that this world exists because I exist, and if I do not exist, the world will not exist. Sometimes it is translated this way; they say, if all the people in the world were to die, and there were no more human beings, and no animals, with powers of perception and intelligence, all these manifestations would disappear. It seems paradoxical, but gradually we will see clearly that this is the easiest thing to prove. It has been demonstrated, and, when that is the case, it is easy to understand. But these European philosophers do not know the psychology of it, although they know the principle; modern philosophy has got only a glimpse of it.

First we will bring another position of these old psychologists, which is that all gross things are the results of fine ones. Everything that is gross is composed of fine things. So these gross things must be composed of finer things, which they call the Tanmatras, the fine particles. I smell a flower; to smell that, something must come in contact with my nose; the flower is there and I do not see it move towards me; but without something coming in contact with me, I cannot smell the flower. That which comes from the flower and in contact with my nose is called the Tanmatra, fine molecules of that flower,

so fine that the flower may go on millions of years diffusing them, and yet that will not cause a diminution in the flower. So with heat, light, and everything. These Tanmatras can again be subdivided into atoms, or anything you like. Different philosophers have different theories, and we know these are only theories; so we leave them out of discussion. Sufficient for us that everything gross is composed of things that are very, very fine. So we first get the gross elements, which we feel externally, and then come the fine elements, which touch our organs, which the nose, eyes and ears come in contact with. A compilation of light-waves, ethereal waves, touches my eyes; I cannot see it, yet I know it must come in contact with my eyes before I can see the light, or anything. What is the cause of these Tanmatras? A very startling and curious answer is given by our psychologists—self-consciousness. That is the cause of these fine materials. That is also the cause of the organs.

What are these organs? Here are first the eyes, but the eyes do not see. Take away the brain centre which is in the head, the eyes will still be there, the retinae complete and also the picture, and yet the eyes will not see. So the eyes are only a secondary instrument, not the organ of vision. The organ of vision is the nerve centre in the brain. Likewise the nose is an instrument, and

there is an organ opposite to it, behind. The senses are simply the external instruments. It may be said that these different organs, Indriyas as they are called in Sanskrit, are the real seats of perception.

What is the use of having one organ for the nose, and one for the eyes, and so on? Why will not one serve the purpose? Because that could not be; for, if one served the purpose, we would find that when the mind has detached itself from one thing and joined itself to another, all the senses would be equally active. To make it clearer, I am talking to you, and you are listening, and you do not see what is going on, because your mind has attached itself to the organ of hearing and has detached itself from the sight organ. If there were only one organ, the mind would hear and see at the same time, it would see and hear and smell at the same time, and it would be impossible for it not to do all these at the one time. Therefore it is necessary that there should be separate organs for all these senses. This has been borne out by modern physiology. It is certainly possible for us to hear and see at the same time, but that is because the mind attaches itself partially to both centres. These are the organs.

What are the organs? We see that the instruments, eyes, nose and ears, are really made of the gross materials. The organs are also made of materials, because they are brain centres. Just as this body is composed of gross material for manufacturing Prana into different gross forces, so these organs behind are composed of the elements, Akasha, Vayu Tejas, &c., for the manufacture of Prana

into the finer forces of perception and all kindred things. All these organs combined, plus the mind instruments, are called the finer body of man,—the Linga or Sukshma Sharira. The Linga Sharira has a real form because everything material must have a form.

Behind the Indriyas is what is called the Manas, the Chitta in Vritti, which is the vibratory state of the mind, the unsettled state. If you take a lake and throw a stone into it, first there will be vibration, and then resistance. For a moment the water will vibrate and then it will react on the stone. So when any impression comes on the Chitta, it first vibrates a little. That is called the Manas. The mind takes the impression farther in, and presents it to the determinative faculty, Buddhi, which reacts. Behind Buddhi, is Ahamkara, egoism, the self-consciousness which says "I am." Behind Ahamkara is Mahat, the intelligence, the highest form of nature's existence. Each one is the result of the succeeding one. In the case of the lake every blow that comes to it is from the external world, while in the case of the lake of the mind the blow may come either from the external world or the internal world. Behind the intelligence is the self of man, the Purusha, the Atman, the pure, the perfect, who is alone the seer, and for whom is all this change.

Man is standing, looking on at all these changes; he himself is never impure, but by implication, what the Vedantists call *Adhyasa*, by reflection, he looks to be impure. It is like a red flower brought before a piece of glass, the glass will look red, or a blue flower, the glass will look blue, and yet the glass

itself is pure. We will take it for granted that there are many selves ; each self is pure and perfect, but these various divisions of gross matter and fine matter are imposing on the self and making it variously colored. Why is nature doing all this ? Nature is undergoing all these changes for the improvement of the soul ; all this creation is for the benefit of the soul, so that it may be free. This immense book which we call the universe is stretched before man so that he may read, and come out, in the long run, as an omniscient and omnipotent being. I must here tell you that some of our best psychologists do not believe in God in the sense in which you believe in him. The real father of our psychologists, Kapila denies the existence of God. His idea is that a personal God is quite unnecessary ; nature itself is sufficient to work out all. What is called the Design Theory he knocked on the head, and said a more childish theory was never advanced. But he admits a peculiar kind of God ; he says we are all struggling to get free, and when we become free we can, as it were, melt away into nature for the time being, only to come out at the beginning of the next cycle and be its ruler. You come out an omniscient and omnipotent being. In that sense you can be called a God ; you and I and the humblest beings can be Gods in different cycles. He says such a God will be temporal, but an eternal God, eternally omnipotent and ruler of the universe, cannot be. If there were such a God, there would be this difficulty ; he must be either a bound spirit or a free spirit. A God who is perfectly free would not create ; there is no necessity.

If he were bound he would not create, because he could not, he would be weak himself. So in either case, there cannot be any omniscient or omnipotent eternal ruler. So in our Scriptures, wherever the word God is mentioned, he says, it means those human beings who have become free. It means that all human beings can melt into one great human being eventually.

Sankhya does not believe in the unity of all souls. His analysis, so far as it goes, is simply marvellous. He is the father of Indian thinkers ; Buddhism and everything else are simply outcomes of his thought. His theory was taken up by the Buddhists, and that is that only the souls will become perfect.

According to this psychology that all souls can regain their freedom and their natural rights, which are omnipotence and omniscience, and all that, the question arises, whence is this bondage ? Sankhya says it is without beginning. But if it is without beginning, it must have no end at the same time, and we will never be free. He says that *this without beginning means not in a constant line*. Nature is without beginning and ending, but not in the same sense as soul, because nature has no individuality, just as a river flowing by us is every moment getting a fresh body of water, and the sum total of all these bodies of water is the river, and the river is not a constant quantity. Everything in nature is constantly changing, but the soul never changes ; so, as nature is always changing, it is possible for the soul to come out of its bondage.

One particular theory of Sankhya is peculiar to this psychology. The whole

of the universe is built upon the same plan as one single man, or one little being. So, just as I have a mind, similarly there is a cosmic mind. When this cosmos comes out, there must be the same things, first intelligence and then egoism, and out of them will come organs, and the fine elements, and then the gross elements, and the world, and everything. The whole universe, according to him, is one body, and all that we see, the grosser bodies, and behind these the finer bodies, and behind them a universal mind, and behind that a universal egoism, and behind that a universal intelligence, all this is in nature, all this is the manifestation of nature, not the outside of nature. Each one of us is a part of that cosmic consciousness. As this cosmic consciousness comes down and becomes broken into parts, we are the results. As we have got the gross body from our parents, our consciousness is just little bits of our parents', sub-divisions and sub-divisions going on. Strict heredity; my body is a part of my parents' bodies, and so all the material of my consciousness and egoism is a part of my parents'. So it will go on. After receiving that little sub-division from our parents, we can again draw upon that universal consciousness. There is a sum total of intelligence out of which we draw what we require; there is a sum total of mental force in the universe out of which we are drawing eternally; but the seed must come from the parents.

But our theory is heredity and re-incarnation too. By the law of heredity the material is given into the hands of the soul by hereditary transmission from the parents, out of which to manipulate

and manufacture mar

In this process there are evolution and involution. All is evolved out of that indiscriminate nature; it goes out as intellect, and all these things, and then comes back again as *Avyaktam*. The question we raised was that it is impossible, according to Sankhya, for any material thing to be, which has not as its material some portion of consciousness. Consciousness is the material out of which all manifestations are made. I do not know this table as it is. It makes an impression; it comes to the eyes, and the *Indriyas*, and then to the mind, and the mind reacts, and that reaction is what I call the table. It is just the same as throwing a stone into a lake; the lake throws a wave against the stone; this wave is what we know. The waves coming out are all we know. In the same way, the fashion of this wall is in my mind; what is external nobody knows; when I want to know it, it has to become that material which I furnish. I with my own mind have furnished the material for my eyes. There is something which is outside, which is only the occasion, the suggestion, and upon that suggestion I project my mind, and it takes the form that I see. How do we all see the same things? Because we all have like parts of this cosmic mind. Those who have like minds will see like things and those who have not will not see. Since this universe has existed, there has never been a want of mind, of that one cosmic mind. Every human being, every animal is furnished out of that cosmic mind, because it is always present and furnishing material for their formation.

INDIAN SOCIAL CONFERENCE

AT the last Christmas gathering of the Indian National Congress, warm had been the expressions of love and gratitude, and warm, too, the sighs of hope and joy that rose from full hearts. The Presidential address, as might be expected, was a master-stroke of oratory, throughout which pervades the spirit of patriotism. The beneficent light and influence of English education are calculated not only to dispel the darkness of ignorance and superstition, but to produce men of superior moral stuff—men who will reverence their own selves and love their country and nationality. On the contrary, if we are sunk, as we are, in torpor and stagnation and do not exert our best efforts in raising our people in the status of a nation, I must say that English language and literature have made no effect. Mr. Surendra Nath Banerji who stands in the forefront of political agitation is a genuine product of English education. It had hitherto been a serious drawback on the part of the leaders of the Congress to bring about political reforms without resorting to the aid of social and religious reforms. The Congress, I believe, has now been taking a move in the right

Considering the important questions involved in this paper, we feel it necessary to observe that, though we publish it without any comment, we have reason not to agree with all the views expressed in it.—Ed.

direction. Mr. Banerji who is known throughout his public life as a mere political agitator took an active part at the last sitting of the Indian Social Conference. We Indians have learnt England's science, her economic doctrines, her principles of free-trade, and we have every right to demand some of the political institutions of England. But any attempt to transplant them on Indian soil is pretty sure to bear no fruit, do we neglect our social institutions which, I think, are the basis of all political institutions in civilised countries of the West. It is for this reason Mr. Banerji held that social and political reforms were interdependent. In our present social arrangement there is a clear surplus of evil over good, which is unreservedly condemned as inconvenient and almost prohibitive of our moral and political regeneration. The great obstacle that stands in the path of progress is disunion among the different strata of our society. The same degrading distinctions, the same burning sense of hatred and malice, the pride of wealth and position among the more fortunate classes and the utter degradation of the lower still hold their high carnival. These things are enough to paralyse the most energetic—to bring despair to the most hopeful. No longer are the hearts and sympathies bound up in a common bond. Each is a kingling in his own sphere of action and the interests of society which he should obey are no

longer his own. We ask for a state of society which shall be more rational, more equitable and more beneficial in its effects, and to its tendencies and growing requirements our political and economical organisations should be regulated. Every young man who is proud of being born in India must untie the Gordian knot of discordant elements that constitute our social order, and must cultivate peace and good-will, unity and co-operation. The varying forces of our society must be incorporated into one grand national aim. This will enable men to devote themselves to the high pursuits of politics in order to make themselves worthy of discharging the truer duties of citizenship in a befitting manner.

Broad questions of social reform have received the attention of the Conference. Let not our leaders simply announce the fact that social reforms are necessary and not conceive the necessity of going any further. We are all-brains, and not all-hands. Mere passing of certain Resolutions for the purpose will yield no beneficial results. No practical work has hitherto been done by the Conference, and no practical work, I believe, is likely to be so long as the Conference goes on with its present *modus operandi*. Our society, conservative as it is, turns a deaf ear to the voice of the Conference. Mr. Chandravarkar's speech was a masterly survey of social problems, but let us bear in mind that social problems are not the same for every part of the country and every community, and hot discussions before a large miscellaneous body of various sects and parties will therefore be barren of any substantial good. Special conferences must be established for particular parts

of the country and for particular communities, and questions of reform should be discussed by local bodies with their Shastric sanctions. Why do our leaders fail to interpret the authority of Shastras which is deemed most essential to anything and everything that concern our society. Take, for instance, the writings of Vidyasagar on widow-marriage. It has the strength of sanction from the Vedas and the latter-day injunctions of the Puranas. Woe to that country that impiously greeted with an outcry of disapprobation the voice of the man who laid down his life for her. The whole question of marriage, indeed, is of sterling importance to every educated Indian. Marriage should never be considered as a trade-partnership of convenience which could be formed and sundered almost at pleasure. It is instinct with a peculiar religious significance and must be performed with religious solemnity and awe. The holy Mantras that are uttered in the ceremony bear ample evidence to it. Our priests who come to be known as custodians of Hindu religion owe no fealty to our Shastras. Mere muttering of certain Mantras in a confused jargon can never make any impression on the minds of the bridegroom and the bride. They must be made to understand in their spoken language the holy path of life in which they are to unite for the journey onward. If we are to renovate this our sacred institution, we must be free from all ideas outraging courtesy or decency. The extravaganza of Hindu marriages, specially among us Bengalees, demands our most serious consideration. There was a time in our country when no one

thought of making money or buying high connections by marrying one's boys. It is a downright meanness to reduce the bride's father to a state of penury by squeezing out of him as much money as one can do. We have received Western light and have therefore become enlightened. We have read the works on political economy of Smith, Mill, and Bentham and learnt the principles of free-trade, and we are in the right by all means to sell our boys to the highest bidder! Enlightenment forsooth! If the bride's father falls short of the amount he proposes to pay, he is not unoften plunged into litigation. Civilisation indeed! Thrice shame, ye educated Indians! Nay,—nay, the idea is most revolting to the sense of delicacy and decency. Humanity veils her weeping face from such a barbarous custom. Will not our patriots take the lead to nip out the evil that has entered bone-deep into the society? If they do, their name and fame will be upon every lip of those whom Fate hath ordained to be fathers of girls.

Before I conclude, I must appeal to our reformers to move their energies in the right directions, and perform worthily the sacred duties they have taken upon themselves in the interests of India. In India, reforms, on whatever lines they may be, must go hand in hand with our national religious revival. Ram Mohan Roy, Kashinath Trimbur Telang and Mahadev Govinda Ranade followed this principle in their works of reform. Why do our patriots show a great reluctance to follow their example? Needless to say that religion is one of the best ingredients that constitute a

healthy nationality. Mr. Banerji spoke with stirring enthusiasm of India's glorious past to stimulate a political passion and to awaken a deep sense of love and veneration for the country. India is the birth-land of a queen of nations and mother of humanity, where her sons—the Aryans—illumined all departments of human energy, cultivating Trade and Commerce, Art and Agriculture, Religion and Philosophy. Moreover, it is the land where the Almighty God incarnated Himself in flesh, Whom man's hands handled, and Who directed him on the sacred path of duty. But how many of our educated youths are fully conscious of the grand and holy duties we owe to the land of our birth? Our choice under the solvent influence of Western civilization has undergone an unfortunate declension, and we have learnt to regard with distaste all that was deemed essential in the interests of India. But all hope is not gone. Signs fraught with promise for the future of our country have begun to shew themselves in several directions. Now is the time for us to shake off our lethargy, to work out our own duty and our motto should be *Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.*

PROMOTHO N. DATT

The goal so shadowy seems and dim,
Yet plod on through the dark,
Brave heart,
With all thy might and main.
Not a work will be lost, no struggle vain,
Though hopes be blighted, powers gone ;
Hold on yet a while,
Brave soul,
No good is e'er undone.

—Vivekananda.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : A REJOINDER

(Reprinted from the *Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar, Allahabad, February, 1903. Reply to Mr. Fraser's paper "Swami Vivekananda: A Criticism".)*

IN the last number of this Review there appeared a paper from the pen of Professor J. Nelson Fraser of the Deccan College, Poona, headed "Swami Vivekananda : A Criticism." One is tempted, at the outset, to quarrel with Professor Fraser, for basing his criticism of Swami Vivekananda's views on an anonymous pamphlet grandiloquently styled "Life and Work of Swami Vivekananda", but which is really nothing but the compilation of a few press notices of the Swami's work, a brief, sketchy (probably a reprint of a newspaper) article on him by Sister Nivedita, only three of his speeches on purely spiritual subjects, his reply to the Madras address and the translation of a fragment of his writing in Bengali. One wonders how the learned Professor could consent to call a publication like this a 'biography,' and then seriously undertake to traverse the views contained in it. One expected a better judgment from Professor Fraser. But we shall not quarrel with him, for we find a note of genuine sympathy for Indians in his paper. We shall proceed at once to lay before him the other side of the picture which he should have seen before writing his article.

To start with, Professor Fraser's charges are that the Swami did not teach 'social reform,' 'industrial development,' and 'political agitation.'

We quote below a few passages from the Swami's speeches and writings, and ask Professor Fraser to read them and see if his charges are not unfounded :

"To the reformers I will point out, I am a greater reformer than any one of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root and branch reform." (*From Colombo to Almora*, p. 127.)

"Give up all those old discussions, old fights about things which are meaningless, which are nonsensical in their very nature. Think of the last 600 or 700 years of degradation, when grown-up men by hundreds have been discussing for years, whether we should drink a glass of water with the right hand or the left, whether the hand should be washed three times or four times, whether five times we should gargle or six times. What can you expect from men who pass their lives in discussing such momentous questions as these, and writing most learned philosophies on these questions! There is a danger of our religion getting into the kitchen. We are neither Vedantists, most of us now, nor Pauraniks, nor Tantriks. We are just 'Don't-Touchists.' Our God is the cooking-pot, and our religion is "Don't touch me, I am holy." If this goes on for another century, every one of us will be in the lunatic asylum.....This has first to be thrown overboard, and you

must stand up, be active and strong.” (*Ibid*, Pp. 79-80.)

“I would rather see every one of you rank atheists than superstitious fools, for the atheist is alive : you can make something out of him, he is not dead. But if superstition enters, the brain is gone, the brain is softened, degradation has seized upon the life.....Brave bold men, these are what we want. What we want is vigour in the blood, strength in the nerves, iron muscles, nerves of steel, no softening namby-pamby ideas. Avoid these, avoid all mystery, there is no mystery in religion.....The fact is we have many superstitions, many a bad spot and a bad sore on our body—these have to be excised, cut off and destroyed.” (*Ibid*, Pp. 196-97.)

“Men must form themselves into groups, you cannot get rid of that. Wherever you go, there will be caste. But that does not mean that there will be these privileges. They will be knocked on the head.” (*Ibid*, p. 161.)

“Our aristocratic ancestors went on treading the common masses of our country under foot, till they became helpless, till under this torment, the poor, poor people nearly forgot that they were human beings.....And if anybody says a kind word for them, with all our boasted education of modern times, I often find our men shrink at once from the duty of lifting up the down-trodden. Not only so, but I also find that all sorts of most demoniacal and brutal arguments, culled from the crude ideas of hereditary transmission and other such gibberish from the Western world, are brought forward in order to tyrannize over the poor all the more.....Aye,

Brahmans, if the Brahman has more aptitude for learning on the ground of heredity than the Pariah, spend no more money on the Brahman's education, but spend all on the Pariah. Give to the weak, for there all the gift is needed.” (*Ibid*, Pp. 106-7.)

“Teach the masses in the Vernaculars, give them ideas ; they will get information, but something more is necessary. Give them culture.....The only way to bring about levelling ideas of caste is to appropriate the culture, the education, which is the strength of the highest castes. That done, you have what you want.” (*Ibid*, Pp. 209-10.)

The above extracts, only a few among many, will show that the Swami was not silent on ‘social reform’. As to ‘industrial development’, no better proof of his interest in the subject can be adduced than his incorporating it as one of the objects of the Ramakrishna Mission of which he was the founder. As to ‘political agitation,’ it is amusing that the Swami should be taken to task by the learned Professor for leaving it alone. The disingenuousness here betrayed by Prof. Fraser makes one wonder if he has not been long enough in the land to know the Indian idea of the relation between Sannyasins and politics, and (what is more interesting) the Government view of the same

The next charge of Professor Fraser, not stated by him in so many words but implied, is that the Swami believed and taught that the world is an illusion. Here are the Professor's words which contain the implication.....“if we are considering refined Hinduism, the faith of the cultivated classes, we

may regard it as tending to one type, and that type, which was accepted and defended by the Swami, is the monism of the *Advait* philosophy. According to this view the world of sense is a disturbance in the infinite silence of God; a thing in itself trivial and unreal, and in its relation to man a mere hindrance which closes the path of freedom and salvation." And again, "The Swami often remarks that politics form the prevailing interest of the West, as religion that of the Hindus. But if the world is an illusion, politics can never be much of an interest."

Now compare the above with the Swami's teaching on the theory of illusion quoted below :

"Almost all of you have heard of the word *Maya*. Generally it is used, though I am afraid very wrongly, to denote illusion or delusion or some such thing..... 'This world has no existence'—*Jagan-mithya*. What is meant thereby? That it has no existence absolute. It exists only as relative to my mind, to yours, and the minds of everybody else.....Nor can it be called non-existent, seeing that it exists, and we have to work in and through it. It is a mixture of this existence and non-existence.....Thus we find that *Maya* is not a theory for the explanation of the world; it is simply a statement of facts as they exist, that the very basis of our being is contradiction, that everywhere we go we have to move through this tremendous contradiction, that wherever there is good there must be evil, and wherever there is evil there must be good, wherever there is life death must follow it as its shadow, and every one who smiles must have to weep

and whoever weeps must smile also..... Shall we not work to do good then? Yes, with more zest than ever, but what this knowledge will do for us is to break down our fanaticism. (*Jnana-Yoga, I.*, Pp. 1, 4, 10 and 15.)

"The Vedanta therefore to become a religion must be intensely practical. We must be able to carry it out in every part of our lives. And not only this, the fictitious differentiation between religion and the life of the world must vanish, for the Vedanta teaches Oneness—one life throughout.....So everything goes to show that this philosophy must be very practical, and later on, when we come to the *Bhagavad Gita*—it is the best commentary we have on the Vedanta philosophy—curiously enough the scene is laid on the battle-field where Krishna teaches this philosophy to Arjuna, and the doctrine which stands out luminously in every page of the *Gita* is intense activity, but in the midst of that, eternal calmness. And this idea is called the secret of work, to attain which is the goal of the Vedanta. Inactivity as we understand it, in the sense of passivity, certainly cannot be the goal." (*Ibid, P.*, Pp. 1, 2.)

"These conceptions of the *Vedanta* must come, must remain not only in the forest, they must not only go into the cave, but they must come to work out in the bar and the bench, in the pulpit, the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and students that are studying." (*From Colombo to Almora*, p. 160.)

Proceeding further, we find Professor Fraser making light of the Swami's feeling about the poverty of India. "The poverty of India", says he, "gives the

Swami less disquietude, though he complains in one place, somewhat rhetorically that 'India is populated by 300,000,000 of beggars.' I doubt, however, if the Swami, on the whole, thought this much of an evil."

His want of information has here led Professor Fraser to do a cruel injustice to the Swami. No son of India felt for the poor more than he did. At the Parliament of Religions itself (10th day, September 20th) the Swami said, "You Christians who are so fond of sending out missionaries to save the souls of the heathens, why do you not try to save their bodies from starvation?.....You erect churches all through India, but the crying evil in the East is not religion—they have religion enough and more than they need—but it is bread that these suffering millions of burning India cry out for with parched throat. They ask of us for bread but we give them stones.I came here to seek aid for my impoverished people, but I fully realised how difficult it was to get help for heathens from Christians in a Christian land."

We are sure if Professor Fraser had a little knowledge of the man he sat down to criticise, he would never have accused the Swami of want of feeling for the poor. What little practical work the Swami was able to do in his own country was entirely for the poor. The famine relief work, the starting of orphanages, the relief of the sufferers from flood and other catastrophes, the nursing of the plague-stricken and sanitary work in *bustees*, the Homes of Service at Benares and Kankhal—who inaugurated these as part of the duty of the *Sannyasins* of his

monastery and with what object? No religious ceremony or celebration is held in the monastery founded by him but the poor are fed with an attention and care which they do not hesitate to proclaim they have not anywhere else. We need say no more on this subject, for we believe that Professor Fraser is wrong not in his heart, but in his judgment, namely, in undertaking to criticise a man without caring to obtain all the available information about him.

Later on, Professor Fraser questions the ability of the Swami to hold the position of a missionary to the West and says the Swami "may as well give up the task at once," because he does not like the Swami's assertion that "part of the Sunday School Education for children consists in teaching them to hate everybody who is not a Christian, and the Hindu specially."

Apart from the fact that premature death has made the Swami 'give up the task,' we need not happily trouble to vindicate the Swami's position as a missionary to the West, even though it is questioned by the learned Professor. That position has long been founded on the rock of unanimity of greater authorities on the matter than Professor Fraser, both Western and Eastern. At the risk of being charged with using extravagant language we make bold to state that the Swami's mission to the West is destined to stand as a landmark in history, at least of modern India. Nor do we feel it necessary to controvert the oft-controverted assertion echoed by the Professor in the lines:—"The sense of personal responsibility must be heightened, responsibility to society and responsibil-

ity to God ; and this will not be found compatible with a narrow view of the unity between man and God. Neither will it be found compatible with the notion of *Karma*."

But we shall quote for his persual the Swami's words about "a stronger grasp of the *reality* of life," which he thinks Hinduism needs.

"What we (present-day Indians) have not, perhaps did not exist in the past (India). What the Yavanas possessed, by the life-breath of which tremendous forces generated in the electric-battery of Europe are encompassing the whole world, that is wanted. That exertion is wanted, that love of independence, that self-reliance, that immovable fortitude, that practicality, that bond of unity, that thirst for progress. Postponing for a while the eternal-looking-backwards, the infinite all-embracing forward look is wanted, and is wanted *Raja-guna* (the principle of activity) flowing through every nerve from head to foot.....

"Where is the large heart which forgets even its own body in the meditation of Beauty and Sublimity? Those that exist are only a handful in proportion to the whole population of India. Are crores of men and women to be crushed under the social and religious wheel for the freedom of this handful of individuals?" (*Udbodhana Vol. I., p. 5.*)

"At the outset it should be clearly understood that there is not a single virtue which is the exclusive possession of a particular nation. But as in individuals, so in nations there is preponderance of particular qualities.

"In our country, the desire for freedom is preponderant. In the West it is that

for Dharma. What do we want? Freedom. What do they seek for? Dharma. I use the word Dharma here in the sense of the Mimamsakas. What is Dharma? That which inclines men towards pleasure in this world or in the next. Dharma is characterised by action. It makes man seek after pleasure day and night. It makes him toil for pleasure.

"What is Moksha (Freedom)? That which teaches that it is slavery to go in for pleasure, be it in this world or in the next. Because neither of these is beyond the laws of nature, the difference being as between an iron chain and a gold chain.....

"There was a time, when harmony existed between Moksha and Dharma in India. Then lived men like Vyasa, Shuka and Janaka side by side with men like Yudhisthira, Arjuna, Duryyodhana, Bhishma and Karna. With the appearance of Buddhism, Dharma fell into discredit. The path of Moksha alone became important. This has been said in the *Agni-purana* in the form of an allegory. Gaysura (Buddha) was about to destroy the whole world by showing all men the path of Moksha. So the gods came to him and by a stratagem laid him at rest for ever. In a word what you hear from every one about the miserable condition of the country—all that is due to want of Dharma. It would undoubtedly be very good if the whole country could go in for Moksha, but that can never be. Renunciation cannot come unless preceded by sense-enjoyment. Enjoy first, then will renunciation come. If instead, the whole country turn into Sannyasins, in a fit, both sides will be lost. When in the Buddhist regime, there

were hundreds of monks in every monastery, the downward course of the country began. It is a mistake on the part of the Buddhist, the Christian, the Musalman and the Jain to think that the same laws are for all. This is a great mistake. There must be difference in education, customs and laws in different nations, individuals and temperaments. What avails to try and unify them by force? The Buddhist says, "What is there like freedom? Let the whole universe come and have it." Is that feasible? You are a householder. You need not trouble much about these things. Perform your own duty,—the Hindu's scriptures say this. This is as it should be. You cannot jump a cubit, how can you leap over to Lanka? Is that possible? You cannot appease the hunger of a handful of men, a handful of you cannot combine and achieve any work of public good, you are running to secure Moksha!! The Hindu's scriptures say, 'Surely Moksha is higher than Dharma, but Dharma should be performed first.' The Buddhists muddling themselves on this point brought on all these disasters. Non-injury is right. To have no ill-feeling towards any being is a great precept. The precept is noble indeed. But the scriptures say, 'You are a householder, if you are given one slap on the cheek, you must give ten in return. Otherwise, you will commit a sin.' Says Manu, 'there is no sin in killing even a Brahman who has come to murder you.' This is a truth which should be never lost sight of. The strong enjoy the earth. Assert your strength, practise the fourfold polity of *Sāma*, forbearance, *Dāna*, conciliation, *Bheda*,

separation and *Danda*, punishment; enjoy the earth, then you are true to your Dharma. But if pocketing kicks and blows, you live a contemptible life, know that you have hell here as well as hereafter. This is the teaching of the Shastras. Do your own Dharma, my child, verily, verily, this is the highest truth. Be not unjust, do not oppress, do good to others to the best of your ability. But to put up with injustice is a great sin for the householder. He must remedy it at once. With great zest, you must earn money, support your family, dependants and others and perform works of public good. If you cannot do this, do you claim to be a man? You are not even a householder, you talk of Moksha." (*Udbodhana Vol. II.*, Pp. 291—293.)

"Look at this irony. Jesus the Lord of the Europeans taught: 'Do away with enmity; if you are struck on one cheek, turn also the other. Shut up all work, be ready with bag and baggage. I am coming back soon, the world will be destroyed in a short time.' While our Lord said: 'Work always with great enthusiasm, destroy your enemies, enjoy the world.' But the results were reversed. The Europeans never took that teaching of Jesus seriously. Full of energy, full of activity, they are drawing to themselves with great zeal, the objects of pleasure from distant lands and enjoying them. While we sitting in a corner, ready with bag and baggage, are pondering on death day and night, singing 'Life is unsteady like the drop of water on a lotus-leaf'.....Who realised the teachings of the *Gita*? The Europeans. Who acted according to the ideas of

Jesus Christ? The descendants of Krishna!!" (*Ibid.*, p. 321.)

"Our young men must be strong first of all, religion will come afterwards. Be strong my young friends, that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to heaven through foot-ball than through the study of the *Gita*.....You understand the *Gita* better with your biceps, your muscles a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the *Upanishads* better, and the glory of the Atman, when your body stands firm upon your feet and you feel yourselves as men." (*From Colombo to Almora*, p. 158.)

"Let them (the masses) have faith in themselves. For what makes the difference between Englishmen and you? Let them talk their religion and duty and so forth, I have found the difference. The difference is here, that the Englishman believes in himself and you do not. He believes in his being an Englishman and he believes he can do anything. That brings out the God within him and he can do anything he likes. You have been told and taught that you can do nothing and non-entities you are becoming every day. Therefore believe in yourselves. What we want is strength. We have become weak and that is why occultisms and mysticisms come to us—these creepy things. There may be great truth in them, but they have nearly destroyed us. Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long. No more weeping; but stand on your feet and be men. It is man-making religion

that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want." (*From Colombo to Almora*, p. 139.)

The learned Professor makes a great mistake again when he says, "The Swami did not apply his analytical powers to this problem" (that of the nature of 'enlightened toleration'). The Swami never tolerated the 'toleration of mere apathy.' Witness his words: "Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical." (*Karma-Yoga*, p. 15.)

"Do you not see, that under the pretext of practising *Satva-guna* the whole country is sinking in the ocean of *Tama-guna*? Where the great blockhead hides his ignorance under cover of devotion to supreme wisdom, where the inherently lazy veils his idleness by the garb of renunciation, where the inhuman wretch by mock asceticism succeeds in making cruelty pass for piety, where no one is alive to one's own incapacity and all evils are attributed to others, where education consists in memorising a few books, genius in doling out ill-digested second-hand information and highest glory in singing the praise of ancestors—does it require any further proof to show that that country is daily sinking more and more into *Tama-guna*?" (*Udbodhana Vol. I.*, p. 5.)

"Therefore, the only alternative remaining to us, is to recognise that duty and morality vary under different circumstances; not that the man who resists evil is doing what is always and in itself wrong, but that in the different circumstances in which he is placed it may become

his duty to resist evil.....The extreme positive and the extreme negative are always similar.....Of like nature is the difference between resistance and non-resistance. One man does not resist, because he is weak, lazy and cannot, not because he will not. The other man knows that he can strike an irresistible blow if he likes; yet he not only does not strike but blesses his enemies. The one who resists not from weakness commits a sin.....While the other would commit a sin by offering resistance." (*Karma-Yoga*, Pp. 13 and 14.)

"In spite of the greatness of the Upanishads, in spite of our boasted ancestry of ages, compared to many other races, I must tell you in plain words, we are weak, very weak. First of all is our physical weakness. That physical weakness is the cause at least of one-third of our miseries. We are lazy; we cannot work, we cannot combine, we do not love each other, we are immensely selfish; not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other. That is the state in which we are, hopelessly disorganised mobs, immensely selfish; fighting each other for centuries, whether a certain mark is to be put this way or that way; writing volumes and volumes upon such most momentous questions as to whether the look of a man spoils my food or not! This we have been doing for the last few centuries.....And we are not ashamed!" (*From Colombo to Almora*, p. 157.)

In the concluding lines of his paper, the learned Professor quotes the words of the Swami "the ancient sage, dressed in a bit of loin-cloth, living in a forest, eating roots, and studying the Vedas," and

states that that is the ideal of "the Vedanta as Vivekananda interprets it." We do not for a moment deny that as a pre-eminently spiritual man the Swami put forward the above as the highest spiritual ideal. But we shall be doing a great injustice to him if we forget that he never preached this ideal as that of the many. Witness his words:

"Where is the large heart which forgets even its own body in the meditation of Beauty and Sublimity? Those that exist are only a handful in proportion to the whole population of India. Are crores of men and women to be crushed under the social and religious wheel for the freedom of this handful of individuals?" (*Udbodhana*, Vol. I., p. 5.)

Then what is the ideal he preached to the great majority? Here it is, in his own words:

"The ideal man is he who, in the midst of the greatest silence and solitude, finds the intensest activity, and in the midst of the intensest activity, finds the silence and solitude of the desert." (*Karma-Yoga*, p. 9.)

SWARUPANANDA

CORRESPONDENCE

NEW YORK VEDANTA WORK

To the Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.
Dear Sir,

Carrying out the usual custom of making the observance of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday in New York as nearly as possible simultaneous with that at the Math in India, the celebration of the Vedanta Society began on the eve of the anniversary with a talk on the Bhagavan by Swami Abhedananda.

The lecture rooms of the Society House were filled with students and friends, and all present listened with wrapt attention to the story of the life of his Master, which the Swami lovingly told with such earnestness and vividness as to lend a new reality and meaning to the character and mission of the Great Soul, whose work we are all striving to accomplish.

On the following morning the offerings began to pour in at an early hour in such profusion that, after the Swami had himself tenderly placed the photographs of the Master on the altar, it became an arduous task to dispose of the masses of flowers and fruits brought. Soon every jar and vase and bowl was full, and great bunches of roses, violets, tulips and carnations were banked on the platform or on the floor at the foot of the altar. Garlands were also hung round the pictures of Ramakrishna and of Christ, of Swami Vivekananda and of Swami Abhedananda, which always hang on the walls of the rooms. In no previous year have the offerings been so generous, and their beauty and lavishness stood as visible proofs of the growing reverence and devotion felt among us for the teachings of Ramakrishna and His disciples.

The attendance too was larger than ever before. The fact that the anniversary fell on Sunday made it possible for many to take part who during the week are kept away by business or professional engagements, and in consequence all available space was taxed to its utmost capacity. When each had found a place, the Swami entered, and the service began with salutations to Ramakrishna chanted by all, after which came meditation,

prayers, a eulogy of the Master pronounced by the Swami, then more chanted salutations and silent worship—the whole lasting about an hour and a half. At the close, the fruit was passed, flowers were distributed and while a certain number still lingered about the altar, the Swami retired to prepare for the public lecture on the Master which occupied the afternoon.

It had been a question in the minds of many whether the general public would manifest any special eagerness to hear about "A Modern Hindu Saint", the subject not being one of popular interest, and it was therefore particularly gratifying to have one of the largest audiences of the winter assemble in Carnegie Lyceum. Among those also who came was a number of strangers, who having heard the Swami's eloquent words, must have gone away with a new and keen realization of what vast spiritual riches India has held and still holds for the world, and how great must always be our debt to her.

L. G.

New York, U. S. A.

NEWS AND NOTES

THE jaw-bone of the average whale is 25ft. in length. The tongue of such a monster will yield a ton of oil.

DENMARK'S educational system is so perfect and popular that throughout the entire country there is not one illiterate family.

MR. Vishwanath Vaidya who is studying at Cambridge has been assigned a Research scholarship by the University

of Edinburgh and has been assigned the task of examining books on logic in the Sanskrit language.

THE Raja of Nashipore will every year award to the first girl of the Mahakali Patshala, Calcutta, a medal to be called "Lady Curzon Medal" in commemoration of Her Excellency's presidency over the prize distribution of the Patshala this year.

PROFESSOR Jacobi, a leading physician in Germany, bequeathed 20,000 marks to the University of Berlin on condition that the University should not have the money until women were admitted as regular members in at least two departments.

BE sincere with yourself, whatever may be the temptation be. Say nothing to others that you do not think, and play no tricks with your own mind. Of all the evil spirits abroad in this mysterious world, insincerity is the most dangerous.—*The Arya*.

THE Dewan of Puddukotah has asked the Dewan of Mysore, for the loan of services of a Geologist to work in that Native State. From the letter it would appear that the Mining Industry of that State has been taken in hand and the prospect of a Gold Mine is not far distant.

A NEW sort of malady is said to be prevalent in Siam of late especially among the natives, who call it "Fainting Sickness." A person is going about his business in perfect health. Immediately

he falls into a dead swoon and remains unconscious for an hour and sometimes two, then regains his senses and is as well as ever.

ARGUING from the fact that there is no sound reason why the left hand should not be developed equally with the right hand, and from the further fact that many physicians who have given the matter some study see in the use of both hands to the same extent very satisfactory results on the general health, school authorities in Germany have made left hand work during part of the time compulsory on the student.

THE coveted order of Merit has been conferred upon Lance-Naick Jagat Singh, 4th Punjab Infantry, for an act of bravery which shows the stuff the Sikh sepoy is made of. It was at Kohat, on a cold night last October, when in the words of the official report, "he grappled with a thief armed with an Afghan knife and succeeded in securing the man until assistance arrived, although stabbed in several places by him and shot through the shoulder and chest by one of his accomplices."

THE alligator and tiger are noted for their voracity, fierceness and sworn enmity. They fight duels both on land and in water. On land the tiger wins the day and in the water the day belongs generally to the alligator. Near the Sunderbans tigers go to the river-side and roar with all their might for some time. This attracts the alligators. The fights commence sometimes on land and sometimes in water. Sometimes the

tiger, sometimes the alligator and at times both pay the debt of their brutal nature.

THE progress of ship-building is well illustrated by a four-masted wooden barquentine intended to be used exclusively as an oil-carrier just built in California. There are sixteen compartments built solidly into the hull, eight on each side. These extend from the keelson to the deck and give her a carrying capacity of fifteen thousand barrels, the equivalent of two thousand five hundred tons. With a full cargo of oil aboard she will be absolutely unsinkable. The bulk-heads are like the frame and skin of the vessel built of wood.

THE Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, at the Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Kankhal, at the Ramakrishna Math, Arasampatty and at Rajahmundry.

On the occasion of the celebration at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, there were *Sankeerttana* from morning till 11 A. M., then entertainment of the poor and friends, and discourse on the Mahabharata by a celebrated *Kathaka*. At 6 P. M., an address was delivered by G. Venkataranga Row, M. A., on Sri Ramakrishna to an overcrowded audience, Prof. M. Ranga Chariar presiding. The festivity ended with *Aratrikam* at 8 P. M.

Public Opinion gives a translation from the *Revue Pédagogique*, Paris, describing the system of primary training in Sweden. On the subject of compulsory education it says: "The school age for children is from seven to

fourteen. Scholars who have not passed through all of the required classes when they are fourteen must continue in school; on the other hand, those who have obtained the required knowledge before the fixed time can quit the school. According to the law of 1900 concerning the employment of women and children in manufactories, minor children must not be employed unless they are twelve years of age and are in possession of their school certificate, certifying to the fact that they have completed the required course of study. Children under thirteen years of age must not be employed more than six hours per day, nor before 6 a. m. nor after 7 p. m., and employers are compelled to provide for children under fifteen years of age necessary and sufficient time for study. If parents and guardians persist in ignoring the legal requirements for schooling, they are warned by the president of the school council, and if these warnings are ignored the child is taken from such parents and guardians and given to other persons, or is placed in a home provided for this purpose. The maintenance of the child is at the expence of the parent or guardian, and in certain places as Stockholm, for example, there are private boarding places wherein these neglected children are placed. The one at Stockholm contains usually about twelve children, whereas they are nearly 27000 children in the primary schools. The children are kept in these public detention homes for from six to twelve months, after which period they are returned to their parents or guardians, but only on condition that they attend school regularly."—*Woman's Tribune*.